

FIGHTERS FOR FREEDOM OF ISRAEL

D A I L Y P R E S S B U L L E T I N

• No. 41

Tel-Aviv, 12th September, 1948

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1) SIMPLE LANGUAGE.

("Mivrak", 12.9.48.)

Some persons, usually described as "authoritative L.H.Y. circles", were asked last Saturday how they were affected by such acts of the Government last week as the raid on Ramath-Yair and the arrest of "Mivrak" editors. Their reply was: "We were not among those who danced on the night the U. N. decided to partition Eretz-Israel".

Those in the know understood the hint and smiled. But since there are people to whom a hint is not enough, we think it advisable to explain the matter in the simplest grammar-school language, to suit the level of political development of the Government of Israel.

It was with mixed feelings that the L.H.Y. emerged from the underground. True, it was good to see daylight again after so many years of hiding, to be able to return to one's parents, or to wife and children, to walk in the streets, to see the blue skies in reality and not in a dream, to see soldiers and policemen and not to be afraid of them; to say nothing of those who came out of prisons or back from the African banishment.

Nevertheless there was no joy. Too great was the difference between the vision they had woven in the darkness of cellars and the reality of that day. To many that day brought the realization of their dream, but those were people who lack courage and imagination even in dream. Those who went into hiding together with Yair and those who joined them later were ready to remain in the underground for many more years, to bear more hardship and suffering, more years of imprisonment, even more gallows, in order to see the glorious day of final victory and the triumphant march of Jewish columns back from the conquests of Nablus and Amman, Gilead and Eilat, on their way up to sun-gilded, free Jerusalem.

- 2 -

What really happened was very different indeed.

So when L.H.Y. men came out of hiding they did not dance. Personally, life became easier for them, but personal considerations find no room in a heart full of grand vision. Those who cannot grasp a hint are well advised to pay special attention to the underlined words, for in them lies the reason why it was such a simple matter to the editor of "Mivrak" to step over the prison threshold of the State of Israel, situated on the bank of the Yarkon River, as if it were simpler and easier than sitting in the editorial office and staring at blank spaces on the pages of his paper, left there by censor. Perhaps they would even understand why glittered with animation the usually dull eyes of a printing shop hand, who was used to printing the underground paper "Hamaas" in perfect freedom.

The nature of that animation cannot be changed by the fact that it was not Farran who killed Yedidya Segal, nor Kaferatta who shaved the leaders of Guardians of Sabbath, nor that British socialist Grant who beat Jewish prisoners in Jerusalem.

The day of our rejoicing will not be the outcome of a gift received from the hands of strangers.

We hope that those who gave orders to raid Ramath Yair and arrest the editors of "Mivrak" will understand this. If they cannot understand this grammar-school language, we are ready to try for their benefit another pedagogical system, more suitable for kindergarten, not so abstract and based on practical demonstration..

2) EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN THE MINISTRY FOR DEFENCE AND THE L.H.Y. SECRETARIAT IN CONNECTION WITH THE RAID ON THE L.H.Y. CAMP AT SHEIKH MOWANNIS.

(1) Secretariat of the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel

Tel-Aviv, 8th September, 1948.

Minister for Defence,
General Staff.

Sir,

We wish to bring to your notice the following acts, committed by military forces under your command.

- 3 -

Since our Fighters joined the army of Israel, we have retained in our possession Mukhtar's houses at Sheikh-Mowannis and used them as -

- (a) Training farm for future agricultural settlement of our members;
- (b) Youth camp;
- (c) Supply base for our military unit in Jerusalem.

As you must be aware, negotiations between the Provisional Government of Israel and the persons in charge of that unit, for the purpose of reaching an agreement with the Defence Army troops, now in occupation of Jerusalem, are under way.

At a meeting about two months ago between Mr. Levy Shkolnik, Vice-Minister for Defense, and our representative, the latter declared that we were sending necessary supplies to our military unit in Jerusalem. The houses at Sheikh-Mowannis have been used as central stores for those supplies.

On Tuesday, 7th inst., Military Police surrounded the camp, seizing all property and arresting all grown-up personnel found there at the time.

We protest emphatically against this act and, moreover, wish to bring to your notice some particulars reflecting on the manner in which it was carried out:

- (a) Although on 29th August we informed the Ministry of Interior of the existence of central Secretariat of our movement and supplied the address (27, Allenby Rd.), persons responsible for the above act failed to apply first to the Secretariat, at least for the purpose of having its representative present during the search;
- (b) Likewise, persons in charge of the camp were not contacted; instead doors were broken without any need or justification;
- (c) Both the "search" and the "seizure" (with civil police carrying on at night) were carried out in a manner more suggestive of looting than of an orderly action by an established authority.

In view of the above we have a following request to submit:

- (a) Immediate release of all our members arrested at Sheikh Mowannis;

- 4 -

- (b) Restoration of all property removed from the camp;
- (c) Punishment of persons responsible for this disgraceful act.

In the hope that the above request will be granted for the sake of safeguarding order and curbing arbitrary action in the young State of Israel, we remain,

Yours respectfully,

Secretariat.

(11)

Bureau of Minister for Defence
No. BTPV/348
9th September, 1948

Secretariat,
Fighters for Freedom of Israel.

Sirs,

I am instructed by the Minister for Defence to confirm the receipt of your letter of 8th inst.

The Minister regrets his inability to comply with your triple request. Persons arrested at Sheikh-Mowannis will be prosecuted for being in possession of firearms without licence and for other offences against the security and laws of the State; the property, if the court finds that you had no right to have had it in your possession, will be confiscated; as to the punishment, it will be borne not by the Military Police, who merely carried out their duty, but by the offenders, should their guilt be proved at court.

Naturally, the accused will be given every opportunity for defence. Decision in the matter rests with court.

Yours respectfully,

(Sgd.) Nehemia Argov,
A.D.C. to Minister for Defence.

- 5 -

(111)

Secretariat of the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel

Tel-Aviv, 12th September, 1948.

Minister for Defence,
Hakirya.

Sir,

We confirm receipt of your letter No. BTPV/341 of 9th inst.

We are fully prepared to have the whole affair, as regards possession of firearms and any other unlawfully possessed property, inquired into by court and particulars revealed to public notice.

We deemed it necessary to bring to your notice the unbecoming and brutal behaviour of the Military Police, as well as their unlawful action, by no means compatible with the honour of the Army of Israel. If, however, you have no desire to uphold this honour, we cannot force you to do so.

Yours respectfully,

Secretariat.

3) FREEDOM OF PRESS IN ISRAEL.

In reply to a query the Prime Minister declared publicly that there was no political censorship in Israel, while military censorship had to be introduced for security reasons, with the sole object of suppressing the publication of certain items of military significance.

On the grounds of that declaration the editor of the "Miv-rak" took issue with the censorship, refusing to submit to its decision with regard to some articles and news items, to which by no stretch of imagination security reasons could be applied. Among these were the articles "Bernadotte's Travels" (6.9.48) and "Another Brilliant Operation" (8.9.48), duly published in this Bulletin, reprints of which are attached herewith.

On Friday, 10th inst., a police party about 20 men strong, appeared on the premises of the "Miv-rak" and arrested the editor, Mr. E. Amikam, and the publisher, Mr. G. Peer, for an alleged breach of Censorship Regulations, committed on 6th inst.

- 6 -

Both were conducted to the Jaffa Prison and released on bail next morning.

It is interesting to note, that when Mr. Granitzky of the Journalists Association telephoned the Chief of Operations, Y. Yadin, in this connection, the latter said that the arrest had nothing to do with Censorship Regulations.

4) GENTLE PERSUASION.

A cartoon against Bernadotte was posted by the L.H.Y. last Thursday all over Tel-Aviv. It represents the Count propelled forward by an outsize boot applied to his behind. The caption reads: "Our advise to agent Bernadotte - GET OUT!"

Is a kick really necessary to make the Count take the advise?